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271520Z Feb 01

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00
	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOIE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01
	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00
	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/010W

-----CAFCAD 271523Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8300  
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000856

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER  
LONDON FOR GURNEY  
PARIS FOR WILLIAMS  
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL. 02/26/11

TAGS: PHUM PGOV PINS PINR ZI

SUBJECT: THREATS AGAINST WHITE OPPOSITION PARTY MEMBERS

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES EARL IRVING. REASONS: 1.5  
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(B) AND (D).

1. (C) IN A FEBRUARY 23 MEETING WITH POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF, MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) MP AND SECRETARY FOR POLICY FORMULATION AND RESEARCH TRUDY

SIPDIS

STEVENSON EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT ESCALATING HARASSMENT OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY'S LEADERS. SHE RECOUNTED A TROUBLING CONVERSATION THAT HER MDC MP COLLEAGUE, MIKE AURET, SR., HAD HAD RECENTLY WITH AN ACQUAINTANCE. THAT ACQUAINTANCE, WHO APPARENTLY IS WELL-CONNECTED TO THE RULING PARTY, WARNED AURET THAT SENIOR PEOPLE IN THE ZANU-PF HIERARCHY PLANNED TO "TAKE OUT" A PROMINENT WHITE MEMBER OF THE MDC BY THE END OF FEBRUARY. STEVENSON, WHO IS WHITE, SURMISED THAT THE PRINCIPAL TARGETS WOULD BE AURET AND MP DAVID COLTART, BOTH OF WHOM PRESIDENT MUGABE REGULARLY SINGLES OUT FOR CRITICISM, MOST RECENTLY IN REMARKS TO THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED PRESS ON FEBRUARY 21. STEVENSON FEARED THAT ZANU-PF THUGS COULD INTERPRET THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AS A GREEN LIGHT TO HARM AURET OR COLTART.

2. (C) POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF SOUGHT ADDITIONAL DETAILS IN A MEETING WITH COLTART ON FEBRUARY 27. COLTART CONFIRMED TRUDY STEVENSON'S ACCOUNT, SAYING THE MESSAGE TO AURET HAD BEEN DELIVERED ON FEBRUARY 21 BY JAMES MUSHURI (PHONETIC), A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE NATIONAL MERCHANT BANK. IN ADDITION, MDC ADVISOR CLIVE PUZEY TOLD COLTART ON FEBRUARY 22 THAT A LONGTIME CONTACT IN THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION HAD TOLD PUZEY THAT COLTART IS THE TARGET. COLTART IS CONVINCED THAT THE THREAT IS GENUINE, SINCE HE RECEIVED SIMILAR INFORMATION FROM TWO UNRELATED

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SOURCES. ASKED WHETHER HE HAS TAKEN ANY ACTION TO STRENGTHEN HIS PERSONAL SECURITY, COLTART SHRUGGED, SAYING THERE WAS LITTLE HE COULD DO. HE DOES NOT OWN A HANDGUN, FOR INSTANCE, AND HAS NO INTENTION OF PURCHASING ONE. ASKED WHETHER THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT COULD DO ANYTHING TO BE HELPFUL, COLTART ASKED THAT ANY PUBLIC REMARKS CONTAIN A CATALOGUE OF ABUSES BY THE GOVERNMENT, RATHER THAN ADDRESS HIS CASE INDIVIDUALLY.

3. (C) COMMENT: FOR SOME TIME, RUMORS HAVE CIRCULATED HERE OF THE EXISTENCE OF A DEATH LIST CONTAINING THE NAMES OF MDC MEMBERS. UNTIL RECENTLY, WE WOULD HAVE BEEN SKEPTICAL THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GO AS FAR AS ORDERING THE ASSASSINATION OF MDC LEADERS, OR COMMIT SUCH INFORMATION TO PAPER IF IT TRULY INTENDED TO PROCEED ALONG THIS COURSE. NEVERTHELESS, THE MERE RUMOR OF A DEATH LIST WOULD BE AN EFFECTIVE TOOL IN INTIMIDATING THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS THE GOZ HAS GONE

TO RECENTLY TO SUPPRESS POLITICAL DISSENT AND ALTERNATIVE  
VIEWS -- BOMBING THE "DAILY NEWS" PRINTING PRESS,  
THREATENING JUDGES WITH PHYSICAL HARM AND FORCING OUT THE  
CHIEF JUSTICE, BEATING UP SENIOR MDC OFFICIALS IN THEIR  
HOMES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AS WELL AS ORDINARY  
CIVILIANS IN HARARE'S HIGH DENSITY SUBURBS -- WE FRANKLY  
HAVE STOPPED BEING SURPRISED AT ANYTHING THE MUGABE  
GOVERNMENT DOES. UNDERSTANDING THE CONSEQUENCES THAT SUCH  
A HIT MIGHT BRING WITH IT, GOVERNMENT OPERATIVES PROBABLY  
WOULD NOT CARRY IT OUT, BUT RATHER WOULD CREATE THE RIGHT  
CLIMATE FOR A FANATIC TO DO SO.

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